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Sister's Blast Jolts Mexico's Castro Policy

By HAL HENDRIX
Scripps-Howard Newspapers

MEXICO CITY, July 3—The dramatic defection here this week of Juana Castro Ruz, sister of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, has clearly shaken Mexico's live-and-let-live attitude toward Communist Cuba.

Mexico has clung to a policy of nonintervention. But after Castro's sister caught Mexican officials flat-footed with her denunciation of Cuba's regime and called for hemispheric action against it, the government of President Adolfo Lopez Mateos has been in somewhat of a turmoil.

The presidential palace and foreign office are reexamining the Cuban issue in advance of the scheduled July 21 foreign ministers conference called by the Organization of American States to act on Venezuelan charges of Cuban aggression.

Recalls Diplomat

Mexico has opposed the conference and abstained from the OAS vote to call it. But the foreign office now says its ambassador to the OAS, Vincente Sanchez Gavita, is being called home for consultation.

Foreign Minister Jose Gorostiza said Miss Castro's declarations will not modify Mexico's stand for the time being. But he also said Mexico does not have a "rigid" position.

Some observers, while doubting any major shift before President Lopez Mateos leaves office in December, speculate that Mexico's attitude at the OAS meeting may well be influenced by Miss Castro's defection.

A Big Question

Asked whether Mexico would go along with the majority at the OAS meeting in Washington, Gorostiza will only reply:

"That is the 64,000 peso question."

The Mexico City press has reacted more strongly to Miss Castro's denunciation than at any time since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

Excelsior, while not daring to come right out and demand that the government reexamine its position, has condemned the Castro regime and referred repeatedly to OAS action.

Action Urged

"It is inescapable," the newspaper said, "that the OAS must demonstrate that it wasn't created just to offer friendly criticism and good advice."

"Its apathy and reticence must be converted into an activity that reflects the hemisphere's attitude toward Castro's barbarism."

Novedades, which has supported the government opposition to Venezuela's initiative against Cuba, conceded that Miss Castro's declaration will have "worldwide significance."

Since the Mexican government normally sets the editorial line of newspapers here, some observers believe the editorials are a harbinger of some foreign office modification.